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With kindest regards from

A

PAPER TO BE READ BEFORE THE EAST INDIA ASSOCIATION AT THE CAXTON HALL, WESTMINSTER, S.W. 1, ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1937, AT 4.30 P.M., WITH THE MOST HON. THE MARQUESS OF ZETLAND IN THE CHAIR.

EARLY RELATIONS BETWEEN INDIA AND ĪRĀN

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THE subject on which I have the privilege to address you today may well seem large and out of proportion to the allowance of time which regard for your patience and pressing tasks on my part prescribe. So I may at once refer to the personal considerations which determined my choice of it. The invitation from your Honorary Secretary, my old and valued friend, reached me towards the close of the latest of a succession of archæological journeys which have taken me for the last five years through the whole length of Southern Īrān. But of this journey I have had already occasion quite recently to give an account in a lecture before the Royal Asiatic and Royal Central Asian Societies. On the other hand, my thoughts can never be far away from that North-West Frontier, the Panjāb and Kashmir, the region in which I have spent so many happy years of my semi-nomadic life. It is indeed that border region which attracted me in my early boyhood, which led to the Sanskrit studies of my youth, and in which I was fortunate enough in due course to find what I may call my cherished Indian homeland.

The work which I was able to carry on there for close on fifty years, and I may say with a sense of deep gratitude, for the most part under the generous auspices of the Indian Government, has been mainly archæological. Its aim was, as it must be of all antiquarian labours, to help to throw light on the historical past of that region. Our written records of that past are, alas, very scanty and in inverse proportion to the interest of the ground. But to quote the just words of a great strategist and student of history: "The locality is the surviving portion of reality of an event that has long passed by. . . . It often restores to clearness the picture which history has preserved in half-effaced outlines." So before presenting to you briefly what scattered records and ancient remains allow us to restore of the early relations between

India and Īrān in the broadest outlines, I may ask you to take a bird's-eye view, as it were, of the borderlands which witnessed those relations. We may thus see more clearly how geographical factors have here, as elsewhere also, played a determinant part in historical developments and the interchange of cultural influences.

The Borderlands

It has been my good fortune to gain personal acquaintance with these Indo-Iranian borderlands as far as they lie within the political boundaries of India and Persia, from the Pamirs right down to the shores of the Arabian Sea. The ground on the Afghān side has, indeed, remained closed to me for scholarly enterprise, in spite of the kind interest which three enlightened Viceroys were pleased to show in my endeavours. But the gap thus left in my range of direct observation need not affect the summary sketch here presented of the region comprising those borderlands.

It may briefly be described as stretching from the Hindukush range in its widest sense in the north down to the Arabian Sea. In the east it extends to the Indus, the great river which has given to India its foreign name, significantly enough Iranian in its derivation. From Classical times to the present day its western limit is roughly defined by a line which approximately coincides in the north with the present frontier between Afghānistān and Persia, and in the south with that between British and Persian Makrān. The vast region thus defined includes the North-West Frontier Province and British Balūchistān as well as the whole of Afghānistān, with the exception of Afghān Turkistān, the ancient Bactria. But even this territory, though it does not adjoin proper Indian ground, has yet at certain times in the past played its part in the historical and cultural relations between India and Īrān.

In the region which has been the scene of these relations we have on geographical grounds to distinguish three well-defined zones. The northernmost may be roughly described as comprising mainly the high mountain spurs and great valleys which descend from the Hindukush range to the south and discharge their drainage by the Kābul river into the Indus. None of these

valleys, with the exception of that of the Kābul river itself, could ever have served for any great ethnic movement between east and west or for any important interchange of cultural influences. High mountains divide them, and beyond, to the east, the gorges of the Indus, together with the Himalayan ranges girding and defending Kashmir, provide an effective barrier. Difficult of access and containing but very limited areas of cultivable land, those valleys seem to have been destined by nature to serve as retreats for tribes which stronger ones have dispossessed of more fertile lands.

There is an ethnological and quasi-historical interest attaching to these tribes in Kafiristān, Chitrāl, Darēl, etc. The Dardic dialects spoken by them belong to that Aryan branch of the Indo-European language family which comprises both the Indo-Aryan or Sanskritic tongues of India and the Iranian languages spoken in Persia and in valleys on both sides of the Oxus. To the so-called Galcha tribes in the latter hill tracts they are closely related also by their *Homo Alpinus* type of race. There is strong reason to believe that this population of Dardic speech once extended much farther south than it does now. The process of withdrawal is still observed at the present day; for everywhere to the north of the Kābul river and of Swāt the Dardic dialects are steadily giving way before the Pashtu of the virile Pathāns, the latest invaders from the side of Īrān of the region to the west of the Indus.

The "Gate of India"

A different rôle has been assigned by geography to the valley of the Kābul river. With its fertile tracts at its head around Kābul, lower down about Jalālābād, and where it finally expands into the wide plain of the Peshawar district, this great valley has been destined by nature to serve as a main highway into Northern India. Not without good reason has the famous pass of the Khyber, through which the great caravan route from Kābul descends to Peshawar, been called the "Gate of India." All through historical times it has seen successful invasions pass down here to the conquest, whether temporary or lasting, of the plains

of the Panjāb and Hindustān. Since Alexander's main force proceeded from the side of Kābul to the Peshawar valley and the Indus, none of the great military enterprises following this natural highway has ever failed before the guarding of this gate passed to the British. But it is by no means the only gate, and where large ethnic movements of the past are concerned its importance may be greatly over-estimated.

Certain, however, it is that in the opposite direction it was mainly through the Peshawar valley, the ancient Gandhāra, and its continuation westward that Indian culture, as conveyed in Buddhist doctrine, literature, and art, extended its influence into Afghānistān and beyond it into Central Asia. This was particularly the case during the centuries immediately before and after the commencement of the Christian era. And here passing reference must be made to the valley of the Swāt river, the last great tributary of the Kābul river. This rich and climatically favoured valley, well deserving the ancient name of *Udyāna* ("the garden"), as an old "learned etymology" called it, was since early times famous as a *terra sacra* for Buddhist cult. As such the old Chinese pilgrims knew it, and its abundant Buddhist ruins still attest this nowadays. Here, too, the original Dardic population has been pushed back far into the mountains by the advance of Pathān tribes, the latest of Iranian invasions in these parts.

The Way by Kandahār

We must now turn in our rapid sketch to the second great zone of the Indo-Iranian borderlands. On physical grounds and in view of the cultural and political conditions governed by them it may be roughly described as extending on the east from the Safīd-kōh range, overlooking the Kābul river valley, as far south as the old highway which leads from Kandahār across the Khōjak and Bolān passes down to Sind on the lower Indus. Here, for a direct distance of close on 400 miles, we find a comparatively narrow strip of cultivable plain along the right bank of the Indus adjoined on the west by the hill chains of Wazīristān and by the Takht-i-Sulaimān range. Beyond these lie wide uplands stretching from south of Kābul past Ghazna as far as Kandahār.

Occupation of this great belt must all through the ages have been confined for the most part to hardy semi-nomadic peoples like the present Wazīrs, Ghilzais, and other Pashtu-speaking tribes along the Indo-Afghān border. For climatic conditions greatly restrict irrigation such as sustained agriculture here needs; but for pastoral pursuits they provide adequate scope.

The very limited economic resources of this ground must always have bred predatory habits in a sturdy semi-nomadic race such as the tribes of Iranian speech which occupy it at present. Raids such as used to threaten the settled population along the right bank of the Indus from Wazīrs and others down to our own days are bound to have been known to earlier periods also. Spasmodic incursions of this kind are likely to have varied in frequency and extent according to the strength or otherwise of the régime prevailing in the settled riverine tracts. But apart from them there is good reason to believe that the convenient access which the Kurram, Tōchi, Gumal, and other valleys provide from those uplands to the fertile plains by the Indus, must have always facilitated successful invasions or gradual penetration. The span of recorded history is too short to permit us adequately to gauge the changes thus brought about in the population of the Panjāb by migrations from that trans-border region.

A very different picture is presented to us by the western portion of the zone with which we are concerned. By its chief geographical feature it may be described as comprising the drainage area of the Helmand river and its great terminal basin, Sīstān. Kandahār, the city from which the above-mentioned ancient highway into India starts, lies in a fertile tract between the Arghandāb and Tarnak rivers, tributaries of the Helmand. It probably marks the site of the capital of ancient *Harahvatī* or *Arachosia*, as the territory on the upper Helmand was known in Classical times to Persians and Greeks respectively. That it was since an early historical period a border province between Īrān and India can safely be concluded, on the one hand, from its mention in the Avestic list of Iranian lands and, on the other, from the designation of "White India" under which it figures in late Classical accounts.

The Helmand River

The great expanse of high mountain spurs and narrow valleys which stretches to the north and north-west of Kandahār as far as the head-waters of the Helmand and the Harī-rūd, the river of Herāt, has never played an important part in the political and cultural relations of India and Īrān. Its character as a kind of economic and ethnic backwater is illustrated by the fact that ever since Timūr's great invasion it has remained mainly a resort of the semi-nomadic Mongolian tribes of Hazāra. Where the Helmand river below Kandahār flows in a huge bend to the south-west towards the Sīstān basin, both its banks are adjoined by vast areas of sandy or bare clayey desert. It is the waterless nature of the great deserts here traversed by the Helmand which accounts for the importance which the narrow riverine belt along it has claimed as a safe passage for large tribal or military movements.

But before the Helmand terminates in the great marshes or Hāmūns of Sīstān its abundant waters carry fertility to a wide belt of ground. This, owing to its considerable agricultural resources, must always have very closely affected migrations or campaigns directed towards India from Īrān. Sīstān, or Drangiana, as it was known in Alexander's time, from the Old Persian designation of its population (the "Lake-dwellers," *Zaraṅka*), has always, as far as our historical records reach back, formed an integral part of Īrān. Here tradition located the homeland of those Kayanian kings and that great hero Rustam around whom cluster the chief epic legends of Īrān. Yet the very name of Sīstān, derived from *Saḳastanê*, the later Classical designation of the province, must remind us that the Iranian tribe of the Sakas, who established themselves here after leaving Turkistān about the second century B.C., were destined to provide rulers for centuries over wide territories of Western India.

The briefest reference will suffice here to the tracts, partly oases partly desert, which stretch north from Sīstān to the Harī-rūd and Herāt, the chief place along it. They form the province which the Greeks called Areia, from the name *Haraêva* it bears in the Avesta and the Old-Persian inscriptions of Darius. This territory

was far removed from any direct contact with the Indian marches. But through it passed the most practicable line of advance towards the latter—just as it would now—from the north-east of Persia or the great plains of Turkistān beyond it. We know that Alexander followed this line on his way to Arachosia and the Paropanisus, or Hindukush, above Kābul before his invasion of the Panjāb. Considering the desert nature of most of the ground in that portion of Khorāsān which lies west of Sīstān, it may be safely assumed that the route passing through Areia or Herāt served also as the chief artery for whatever trade or other peaceful traffic linked the Panjāb with the great centres of Persia.

The Makrān Area

It is time now for us to cast a rapid glance at the third and southernmost zone of the Indo-Iranian border region with which we are concerned. It lies to the south of the old highway which links Kandahār, the ancient Arachosia, with Sind on the lower Indus. Apart from the comparatively narrow belt of plain along the right bank of the Indus it corresponds to ancient Gedrosia, the poorest and least known of the provinces of the Achæmenian Empire. Politically it coincides in the east with the present Kalāt State, including British Makrān, and in the west with Persian Makrān. Within an area extending close on 500 miles from east to west and some 270 miles across, we find here a succession of barren mountain ranges. They extend in parallel curves with a general direction from north-east to south-west and gradually decrease in height as they approach the Arabian sea-coast. In the north there adjoins the sandy desert of the Helmand basin, and within there lie the equally barren if smaller drainageless basins of Khārān and Bampūr. The valleys intervening between the utterly sterile hill ranges are almost equally arid and hold rare scattered oases only where irrigation over small stretches of ground is possible. The extreme dryness of the climate permits only of the scantiest population, scarcely two souls per square mile within British territory and beyond it probably even less. The consequent want of local resources accounts for the sufferings and losses which attended the disastrous march of the force taken

by Alexander through Gedrosia. It equally beset also the voyage of his fleet along the forbidding coast of the Ikhthyophagoi, or "fish-eaters."

The Vedic Hymns

However sketchy the acquaintance may be which we have gained in the course of this rapid survey of the border region between India and Īrān, it will make it easier for us to try and understand what information can be gleaned from our, alas, scanty materials as to the earliest developments and events which it witnessed. History in the true sense does not dawn upon the relations between India and Īrān until the middle of the sixth century B.C., when Cyrus, the founder of the great Persian Empire, extended his vast dominion to Gandhāra, including the whole Kābul valley.

For earlier periods, which must be counted prehistoric, we had until recent years to rely mainly upon what indications could be gathered from the hymns of the Rigveda, the earliest literary product of Indian civilization and the oldest textual record to be found in the whole range of Indo-European languages. They have been preserved by tradition, entirely oral for centuries, with a care and formal precision which has no equal among the world's literatures. Since the study of that great collection of sacred hymns on critical lines was started more than a hundred years ago by great Sanskrit scholars in the West, it has yielded abundant information on the religious beliefs, cults, customs, social conditions, etc., prevailing among the earliest Aryan people settled in India.

I enjoyed the good fortune of becoming familiar with those ancient hymns at the very beginning of my philological training under the guidance of that great pioneer of Vedic studies, Professor Rudolf von Roth, fifty-six years ago. So there would be a distinct temptation for me here to review in retrospect the widely varying views held as to the period to which the composition of the older Rigveda hymns may be assigned. To leave aside more speculative estimates, they have varied from the fifteenth to the eighth century B.C. But if in the absence of any definite chronological evidence no consensus on this question can be expected at

present; anyhow, there can be no doubt as to the Indo-Aryans of the Vedic period having been closely related in language and ethnic origin to those Aryans who gave their name to Īrān.

The language of the Vedic hymns shows nearest affinity with that of the Avesta, the sacred code of the Zoroastrian creed of Īrān. This applies particularly to its oldest portion, the Gāthās, which contain the utterances of Zoroaster, its founder. This justifies the inference that those who spoke that eastern Iranian language in its oldest accessible form, and to whom Zoroaster's teaching was directly addressed, had been in near contact at one time with those Aryans among whom the hymns of the Rigveda were composed. Zoroaster's date cannot as yet be considered as definitely determined, nor do his own Gāthās furnish any distinct indication of where he was born or preached. But other Avestic texts clearly prove early acquaintance with localities which belong to the region of the Indo-Iranian borderlands. Thus the list of Iranian territories given in the first chapter of the Vendidād includes not merely *Haraêva*, Herāt, and the "*Haêtumant* country," or Sīstān, but also the Hapta-hindava, corresponding to the *Sapta sindhavah*, or "Seven Rivers," of the Rigveda. More significant still it is that in the Yashts, metric texts embodying much popular lore of Īrān, largely pre-Zoroastrian, we find mention made of *Pisinah*, the present Pishīn valley near Quetta, of localities which betoken familiarity with mountain tracts about Kābul and Peshawar as well as close acquaintance with smaller rivers of the Helmand basin.

There is no need to discuss here these interesting geographical indications, especially as I had occasion to deal with them in some detail when treating of the sacred Soma plant which has played an important part from very early times both in the Vedic ritual and in Zoroastrian cult. Instead I may turn at once to the definite geographical evidence which can be gathered from the hymns of the Rigveda as to the Aryan invaders of Northern India having been familiar with a considerable portion of the borderland along the present North-West Frontier long before they settled in the Panjāb, the "Land of the Five Rivers," where the bulk of those hymns was composed.

In a famous hymn of the Rigveda (x. 75) all the rivers of the Panjāb are mentioned in correct sequence from east to west from the Sutlej (Śutudru) right up to the *Kubhā*, the Kābul river. Together with them we find named the *Krumu* and *Gomatī*, corresponding to the present Kurram and Gumal. Now these are both comparatively small rivers, except when sudden spates fill their beds, and their mention suggests such acquaintance with Wazīristān and the adjacent valleys drained by them as only a recollection of their prolonged occupation by Aryan tribes in an early period is likely to account for. To the same conclusion points also the incidental mention in the Rigveda of two other small rivers of this border tract, the *Hariyūpā* and *Yavyāvatī*. It has long ago been recognized that phonetic derivatives of their names are borne by the present Hariōb and Zhōb, the one a tributary of the Kurram and the other an affluent of the Gumal.

We have an indication further to west of the line which the Aryan invaders of India are likely to have followed. I refer to the Avestic name of the river *Harahvatī*, the present Arghandab, the Arachōtos of the Greeks. This tributary of the Helmand has given its Old-Persian name to the fertile tract of Kandahār through which it flows, and the Greeks accordingly called it Arachosia. *Harahvatī* is the exact equivalent of the Vedic river name *Sarasvatī*, which prominently figures in the Rigveda hymns, with that regular phonetic change of *s* into *h* which distinguishes the Avestic language from Vedic Sanskrit. Whether any of the passages of the Rigveda, naming the Sarasvatī, actually refers to the Harahvatī-Arghandāb, as has been supposed by some scholars, is doubtful. But the relation of the Avestic and Vedic river names is so close as to make it appear very probable that we have here a case of that transfer of river names which has been very common in the *topographia sacra* of India all through the ages.

The Aryan Invaders

The ground we have touched here quite apart from its ancient designation has a distinct interest for the question concerning the migration which brought the Vedic Aryans into India. If we examine geographical conditions over the whole of the wide

region previously surveyed we must realize that there is no portion of it offering greater facilities for a great ethnic movement towards the Indian north-west than the valley of the Helmand and its northern affluents taken as a whole. From the old highway across the Khōjak and Bolān passes right up to the Kābul-Khyber line it gives access to a wide stretch of ground with quite a series of routes which would conveniently serve for a gradual advance of semi-nomadic tribes to the fertile plains on and beyond the Indus.

We may never know for certain from which side the Indo-Iranian border region was first entered by the then perhaps still undivided Aryan people. But whether their migration brought them from the open plains of what is now Russian Turkistān in the north or through Persia in the west, it is clear that the wide belt of open ground along Herāt, Sīstān, and the Helmand valley on account of its physical conditions would have provided the easiest passage for expansion. Migration from the north-west is what the prevailing theory assumes for the move which separated the Aryan branch from the rest of the peoples speaking Indo-European languages. The fact that in a later period also Iranian tribes like the Sakas are still found in the region of the Oxus seems to support this assumption. But another line of migration, that from the west, cannot be ruled out altogether, since the discovery made in Hittite inscriptions of the fourteenth century B.C. has shown that divinities prominent in the hymns of the Rigveda were worshipped and certain Vedic words used by people settled in the Mitanni country adjacent to Northern Mesopotamia.

When so much as regards the period which saw the first arrival of Aryan tribes in the Indo-Aryan border region must remain conjectural, we must feel all the more grateful for the light which archæological discoveries of recent years have thrown upon a far earlier prehistoric civilization in those parts. These discoveries have been made mainly in the last, and at first sight perhaps least promising, of the zones distinguished in our preceding survey.

They were due in the first place and chiefly to the extensive and most fruitful excavations which were conducted since 1922 under Sir John Marshall's direction at the great site of Mohenjo-daro

near the right bank of the Indus in Sind. The abundant remains brought to light from the ruins of a great prehistoric settlement revealed a highly advanced culture having flourished there in chalcolithic times. Ceramic wares and other relics of Mohenjo-daro from the start showed unmistakable affinity to corresponding antiquities of the earliest strata at Susa and other chalcolithic sites of ancient Elam. Through the discovery at Susa and at a few Mesopotamian sites of some seals engraved with characters of the as yet undeciphered "Indus Valley" script, as well as by other collateral evidence, it became possible for Sir John Marshall to determine that the ruins unearthed at Mohenjo-daro, and subsequently also at the similar site of Harappa far up in the Western Panjāb, date from a period comprising approximately the first and second quarters of the third millennium B.C. Through Sir John Marshall's and his collaborators' monumental publication the characteristics of the early "Indus civilization" have become widely known. It will hence suffice here to touch only in the briefest way upon a few essential points.

The comparatively high standard of material civilization attained there is attested by the solid construction of the houses, provided with baths, hypocausts, drains, etc., and the lay-out of paved streets. Metal crafts were fully developed and artistic skill displayed in small sculptures and engraved seals. Painted pottery of a superior kind is common. But perhaps the most striking discovery is the proof of the great antiquity of religious notions quite different from those of the earliest Vedic texts. They are manifestly pre-Aryan, but still predominant in the popular cults of India. Evidence of this is furnished by numerous objects, peculiar to Indian forms of worship, such as the Linga and Yoni and representations of the sacred bull; a Sivaitic god; the Śakti or mother goddess.

Expeditions of 1927 and 1928

It became obviously an important archæological task to trace the connection between this "Indus civilization" and the chalcolithic culture of those early sites in the Near East to which it was manifestly related. The systematic excavation of a small but very

interesting chalcolithic cemetery carried out by Mr. Hargreaves in 1925 at Nāl, in the Kalāt State, showed what reward might await a more extensive search to the west of the Indus. Already, in 1916, at the close of my third Central Asian expedition, I had come at wind-eroded sites of the Sīstān desert upon painted pottery showing unmistakable relationship to chalcolithic ware both of Susa and of Anau in Transcaspia. Thus the task of searching for other links between those earliest known cultures of India and Īrān, using the latter term in its widest sense, across the vast and as yet archæologically unexplored region intervening between the Indus valley and the head of the Persian Gulf, made a special quasi-personal appeal to me.

I was fortunately enabled to carry out this task as far as the westernmost border of British territory by two long expeditions undertaken in the years 1927 and 1928 on behalf of the Indian Archæological Survey. Their results have been fully recorded in my reports: "An Archæological Tour in Wazīristān and Northern Balūchistān" and "An Archæological Tour in Gedrosia," and only briefest reference to them need be made here.

The first of those two journeys allowed me to trace and test by trial excavations a considerable number of prehistoric sites, first along the foot of the Wazīristān hills overlooking the Indus and then in the valleys of Zhōb and Pishīn within Northern Balūchistān. On the second journey, covering a still more extensive area in British Makrān, I was able to discover and survey remains of chalcolithic settlements at close on four score sites right up to the Persian frontier on the shore of the Arabian Sea. Trial excavations at the most important of all the sites scattered over an area of roughly 650 miles from north-east to south-west and some 250 miles across where widest in the south, proved the essential unity of the civilization which existed during chalcolithic times in this great portion of the border region between India and Īrān. At a number of sites the great height of the mounds, together with the uniform character of the finds in their debris layers, proved prolonged occupation during this period. At some sites the abundance of terracotta figurines of the Brahmani bull and the mother goddess seemed to indicate the extension of a cult

similar to that proved for Mohenjo-daro and essentially Indian as far west as the present Perso-Indian frontier.

But of still greater interest perhaps in its general and geographical bearing is the fact that many of those sites are found on ground where the great aridity of the climate coupled with the inadequacy or total absence of surface water would nowadays preclude regular cultivation and the existence of considerable settled communities. Yet such are definitely indicated at a number of sites by ruins marking small towns with stone-built houses, etc.

Plentiful evidence is thus afforded of Makrān and probably most of Balūchistān having in chalcolithic times, say, in the fourth and third millennia B.C., been less arid than it now is. This observation has its special interest in connection with the much-discussed question of "desiccation." If this has been local, as I am inclined to believe in parts of Central Asia also, it may here well be accounted for by some change in the direction and extent of the south-west monsoon. This question can be touched here only in passing. But mention must be made of the plain fact that the great hardships and losses suffered by Alexander's troops on their disastrous march from the mouth of the Indus clearly prove the wastes of Gedrosia having been then already as arid as they now are.

Later Expeditions

Since my retirement from the Indian Archæological Survey in 1929 I have been able by four successive expeditions, the first two effected with the help of Harvard University and the British Museum and the third with that of the British School in Iraq, to continue my archæological reconnaissances from the south-western extremity of British Makrān right through the length of Southern Persia to Kurdistān. The first of these journeys took me across Persian Makrān, the western portion of the zone with which I have been dealing. The observations and finds made here at chalcolithic sites fully bore out the significance of those on the British side of the frontier. But curiously enough the terracotta figurines pointing to notions of Indian cult were nowhere to be found at such sites. The evidence secured by the

explorations of all these journeys in the great provinces of Kermān, Fārs, Khūzistān, Kermānshāh, right up to Kurdistān, left no doubt about an essentially uniform chalcolithic civilization having prevailed wherever physical conditions permitted of settled life.

The possibility of peaceful traffic and trade between India and the Near East across Īrān may therefore be assumed even in those early times. But this leaves us still far from any definite clue as to where that prehistoric civilization originally developed; whether Īrān saw its first growth or whether it served then as it so often did in historical times as a kind of clearing-house for cultural influences. Where my travels took me along the shore of the Arabian Sea and the desolate coast of the Persian Gulf, I searched in vain for any relics of a maritime trade in prehistoric times between the Indus valley and Mesopotamia. Yet proofs of maritime intercourse from the early Islamic period onwards were found in abundance. But the subsidence of this coast, as proved by my observations at certain points, deprives this negative evidence of such value as might be attached to it otherwise.

Of all the ethnic movements across the Indo-Iranian border region, the one which brought the Aryan tribes speaking Vedic Sanskrit to the Indus and the Panjāb is bound to have the greatest claim upon our interest owing to the far-reaching and lasting character of its results. It belongs, as we have seen, wholly to prehistory, and unfortunately archæology has up to the present failed to throw light on this period. Nowhere has the ground visited on my journeys yielded remains filling the wide chronological gap between the chalcolithic mounds traced in such abundance and the burial sites found in numerous places of Balūchistān and Makrān which date at the earliest from the last centuries before our era. Not until sites abandoned much later than Mohenjo-daro have been explored can we hope to learn of the actual state of civilization prevailing in the Indus valley and beyond at the time of the Aryan invasion. Meanwhile we may be content with what observations as to the physical character of the ground adjoining those fertile plains on the west and historical parallels can teach us.

Changing Civilizations

Even though that ground may have been less arid about the time of the Aryan conquest than it now is, the limited area capable of cultivation must have caused the invaders while they held it to lead a health-giving semi-nomadic life in the hills. Hardened by it, they are likely to have been tempted to supplement their scanty resources, mainly pastoral, by raids on the settled agricultural people of the plains, just as are their Pathān successors on the present north-west border. That settled population are not likely to have been their equals in virility and physical strength, though probably superior in most things that make up culture. Civilization in the Indus valley by that time may well have sunk below the level which the remains of Mohenjo-daro have disclosed. Civilizations, as we know, are apt to have their ups and downs. But however that may have been, we must in view of subsequent developments credit the race which succumbed to the Aryan invasion with having possessed the same remarkable capacity for absorbing and digesting foreign conquerors as Hinduism has displayed through most historical phases.

This process had, no doubt, far advanced when historical light breaks upon the extreme north-west of India with the conquest by Cyrus (558-530 B.C.) of Gandhāra as recorded by Classical authors. This province forming the eastern limit of the vast empire created by the founder of the Achæmenian dynasty must on geographical grounds be assumed to have included not merely the Peshawar district, to which the term was restricted in later times, but the whole Kābul valley and the territories to the south of it. This conquest was further expanded when Darius, probably after 516 B.C., added the "Indian" province to Gandhāra. This latter is referred to in his inscriptions at Persepolis and Naksh-i-Rustam also under a name corresponding to the Paropanisus of the Greeks—*i.e.*, the Hindukush. As the "Indian" province is named by Herodotus as the most populous division of the empire paying the highest annual tribute, it is safe to assume that it included territories on both sides of the Indus down to Sind.

Both Gandharians and "Indians" are named by Herodotus in the list of contingents provided by subject nations for the Persian army which accompanied Xerxes, Darius' successor, on the ill-fated expedition against Greece in 480 B.C. The dress and armaments of Gandharians and "Indians" are described by Herodotus much as these can still be seen among the tribute-bearing figures shown in the fine relievo panels flanking the stairs of the huge terrace which bears the palaces of the Kings of Kings at Persepolis and now, thanks to Professor Herzfeld's excavations, has been completely cleared. As justly stated by the late Professor Rapson, "At no period in early history probably were the means of communication by land more open, or the conditions more favourable for the interchange of ideas between India and the West."

The Persian Satraps

Unfortunately no definite archæological testimony has so far come to light of the influence which this Persian domination lasting for fully two centuries had exercised in these provinces. Here as elsewhere in the vast dominion of the Achæmenian dynasty direct control must be assumed to have been exercised by Persian Satraps. Their administrative staffs and troops are likely to have been largely recruited from the western portions of the Empire. But there is no reason to believe that the indigenous civilization prevailing in those two provinces was materially affected thereby. From the analogy of what little can be gathered from scattered references to them in the next succeeding period it may be safely concluded that their civilization remained essentially Indian.

We know that Greeks found frequent employment at the imperial court and at the courts of the Persian Satraps. But apart from fragments of the writings of Ktesias, which mainly reproduce folklore stories about India gathered through such channels, nothing has survived of contemporary Greek information relating to this portion of the Achæmenian Empire. On the Indian side we must be content with the fact that Gandhāra is named in very early Sanskrit literature and in Buddhist texts among the countries of India, and that Śalātūra, the traditional birthplace of Pāṇini,

the earliest of the great Sanskrit grammarians, can be safely located at Lāhōr in the Peshawar district.

The hold of the later Achæmenian Kings of Kings over these outlying provinces in the east is likely to have gradually slackened. But when Alexander started on his Indian campaign, the most celebrated of all invasions of India and the oldest of which we possess detailed accounts, he found them still forming, nominally at least, a part of the great Persian Empire to which he laid claim as his heritage by the right of conquest. He first approached them on his march towards Bactria through Areia-Herāt, Drangiana-Sīstān, and Arachosia-Kandahār, those territories of the Indo-Iranian border region to which I have referred before as providing the natural highway and base for any great ethnic or military move into India. When Alexander's march brought him from Arachosia or Kandahār across snow-covered uplands to the foot of the "Indian Caucasus"—*i.e.*, the Hindukush—we find that the inhabitants of that territory, also spoken of as people of the Paropanisus, are significantly described by Arrian (*Anabasis*, III., 28) as "the Indians who were nearest to the Arachotians."

It was in this territory, corresponding to the present Kābul, that Alexander on his return from the arduous campaigns in Bactria and Sogdiana prepared for the invasion which was to carry him across the Western Panjāb as far as the Beās. To follow the great conqueror there would take us far beyond the region with which we are concerned here. Nor need I deal here with Alexander's hard-fought advance across the mountains to the north of the Kābul river. I have shown elsewhere how it led through the Kūnar valley, Bajaur, and Swāt and, after the memorable capture of the great mountain stronghold of Aornos, ultimately brought him to the Indus. It will be enough to state that the valiant hill tribes with whom the Macedonians had so hard a struggle on this difficult ground are always described by Alexander's historians as Indians. They may well have been Dardic-speaking predecessors of those trans-border Pathāns who have figured so often on the same ground in modern North-West Frontier campaigns.

It has been my good fortune to have been able on this ground

to trace much of Alexander's track to the Indus. Beyond it, too, I could visit scenes both on Indian and Iranian soil which once had witnessed great events of Alexander's wonderful story. But by the Indus we have now reached the limits set for this discourse and interesting as it would be to scan later phases in the history of those marches I must leave it as "another story."